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INFO RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 0973
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE IMMEDIATE 1052
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW IMMEDIATE 0210
RUEHLA/AMCONSUL BARCELONA IMMEDIATE 4133
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SIPDIS

ALEX MCKNIGHT AND STACIE ZERDECKI OF EUR/WE
T U/S ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/18/2019

TAGS: [EZ](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN INFORMED OF U.S. MISSILE DEFENSE POLICY
CHANGES

REF: SECSTATE 96550

Classified By: A/DCM William H. Duncan for Reasons 1.4 (a),(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Initial GOS reaction to the USG's new Phased, Adaptive Approach to Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) has been positive. Embassy Madrid on September 17 and 18 widely conveyed to GOS officials the reftel points and the White House press release to ensure that the GOS understood the reasons for and implications of the changes to U.S. policy and planning to BMD. Meanwhile, Post's Public Affairs Section on September 18 emailed out a compilation of fact sheets, press releases and additional materials to more than 100 members of the media, academia, think-tanks and other opinion-makers in Spain to bolster their understanding of the initiative.

¶2. (C) The Charge d'Affaires (CDA) advised September 17 MOD Secretary General for Defense Policy Luis Cuesta on September 17 of the BMD announcement, providing him both the unclassified non-paper and the written points releasable to NATO.

¶3. (C) Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe Admiral Mark Fitzgerald reiterated the message with Cuesta during a September 22 meeting in Madrid. Fitzgerald noted the extensive plans and requirements for ship-based ballistic missile defense in the Black Sea region. Specifying that he was speaking hypothetically, Fitzgerald told Cuesta he "would not be surprised" if the USG were to seek possible homeporting of missile shooting capable ships from Spain, possibly at Naval Station Rota. Cuesta appeared receptive to the idea.

¶4. (C) Post shared reftel points and White House materials with a range of officials within the MFA, including Luis Martinez, Special Adviser to the Deputy Foreign Minister; Carmen Bujan, Director General (A/S-level) for Strategic Affairs and Terrorism; Manuel Acerete Gomez, Deputy DG for International Security Affairs; and Monica Colomer de Selva, Counselor for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in the MFA's Directorate General for Strategic Affairs & Terrorism.

¶5. (C) Acerete noted to Pol-Mil officer that the new policy was a "positive and prudent step" that would be of great relevance for NATO as well as relations with Russia.

¶6. (C) In discussing the issue with POLOFF on September 18,

Colomer asked whether the Czechs and Poles had advance notice of this decision, which POLOFF assured her was the case. Colomer remarked that Moscow appeared pleased with Washington's announcement. She expressed interest in Washington's plan to eventually utilize sea-based versions of the Standard Missile-3 interceptor and inquired whether the DOD review had been completed. Finally, Colomer asked if NATO would be the forum for additional U.S. consultations with its Allies on U.S. BMD policy.

CHACON